AUTOBIOGRAPHY

OF

GEORGE TAIT,

A DEAF MUTE,

Who first gave Instructions to the Deaf and Dumb in the

CITY OF HALIFAX.

Also an Extract from an American Paper on Teachers and Modes of Teaching the Deaf and Dumb.

THIRTEENTH EDITION.

HALIFAX, N. S.:
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PREFACE.

WHEN first I commenced to write this little book I did so without the slightest intention of selling it; I wrote it merely for my own amusement and the pleasure of giving it to some of my friends who had desired me to do so. But when times became so hard, I was thrown completely out of employment and finding it impossible to procure work, I very unwillingly made up my mind to SELL my book instead of GIVING it away as I had intended doing. I had no idea, however, that I would have been favoured with such success, but owing to the kind patronage of both strangers and friends, I have been enabled to sell a large number.

In this my thirteenth edition, I have made a few slight alterations, by inserting a few incidents of my life omitted in the former editions, and adding a brief account of my travels since commencing to sell the book. I have also procured a few references, and as some doubt the validity of my statement concerning my first starting the Deaf and Dumb School in Halifax, I have obtained a passage from an old paper in connection with that fact printed upon the event of the school first being started.*

And here allow me to tender my most sincere thanks to all those who have so kindly and benevolently assisted me by purchasing my book.

GEORGE TAIT.

* GOOD AGAIN.—Mr. Tait, the deaf mute young carpenter, who has been mainly instrumental in getting up the Deaf and Dumb Schools, Argyle Street, informs us that he collected from the benevolent in this City, during ten days, the handsome sum of £40, to aid him in the good cause.

—*Halifax, (N. S.) Chronicle, September 18th, 1856.*

Autobiography of George Tait.

I, GEORGE TAIT, in accordance with the wishes of some of my friends, proceed to write a brief history of my past life; and my sincere desire is to make the book sufficiently interesting to awaken within the bosoms of any who may read it, an interest in the children of silence.

To begin my history where my life began, I shall invite my reader to travel in imagination far across the broad Atlantic, to the heathery hills of "Auld Scotland," "where the kilted lads are born," and visit the haunts of my early childhood.

I was born in Caithness Shire, Scotland, in the year 1828. My father was a farmer, and consequently a thatched cottage and broad green fields form the associations of my earliest remembrance. As there were no fences inclosing my father's farm, it was necessary that the cows and sheep should be herded, and as I was the eldest son and at that time the only one old enough to perform such a task, I was installed as herdsman; a position which I, however, looked upon with no very favourable eye. Ah! I can well remember the horror with which I looked upon those long wearisome hours of dreary watching and herding. How I used to long for the sun to go down, which was the welcome signal for me to return home with my charge. Had I been able to read and thus amuse myself and beguile those uncommonly long hours, herding cattle might not have grown such an inglorious occupation in my estimation. However as it was, I had to amuse myself by imagining things in my own untaught uncultivated mind without the aid of books whereon to meditate. For instance, I used to think the moon was a huge cheese, and as it decreased in size, I supposed without doubt that some invisible person was cutting pieces of this imaginary cheese, and slowly devouring it; while the Northern Lights I supposed to be creatures dancing in the heavens. Indeed the heavenly hosts used to furnish a source of unfailing amusement for me, for I was never tired of gazing at the myriads of twinkling sparkling stars, the great blazing sun, and the pale majestic moon. But it must not for one moment be supposed that it was in my wicked nature to quietly and uncomplainingly do my duty. No, on the contrary, I used to be continually devising all manner of plans to get clear of it. My favorite one was to run off to my grandfather's a distance of about two miles. And my grandfather, who was very fond of me, was always ready with a smile of welcome. I loved him dearly, and he and I were strongly attached.

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But while speaking of my grandfather, I must not forget to mention my grandmother, and how she used to try to teach me to read, and to honor the Sabbath day. Ah! how well I remember the large old-fashioned Bible she used to love so much to read, and how she used to endeavour to teach me to love it too. I used to look with reverence upon that book, not because I knew its inestimable value, but because she placed such store by it. I remember too that the word "God" was printed in large capital letters. She would show me this, and with deep devotion glowing in her faded eyes, point upwards—thus I was at first led to understand that God was one far above this earth, a being whom we are to regard with reverence and awe, and then the look of despair that would come into her eyes when she saw how utterly useless it was for her to try to teach me to read, I can well recollect, although at that time I do not think the thought troubled me much, for I could not see any particular use in my learning to read. I had also the vague idea that I was the only deaf and dumb person in the world. I sigh when I remember those days of blissful ignorance when I knew nothing of this hard, cruel world. But although I cared so much for my grandfather, it did not prevent me from often being very mischievous and thoughtless at his expense. And by way of illustrating how wicked are the thoughts and feelings of even the most ignorant of the depraved and fallen race of Adam, I will relate one or two of the schemes which my mind suggested, as excellent means whereby to torment my grandfather, and thereby create amusement for my own benefit.

One day he was working in his barn, and supposing that I was in the field he carelessly threw his pea-jacket aside and went on with his work, but I was in the barn, and not as he supposed in the field, and at the sight of the jacket came the thought "what a jolly chance for a lark." I always wore a short kilt, and I thought it would be splendid to have a pair of pants, so I took the jacket and forcing my legs into the sleeves of it prepared to have some fun, but alas! to my grief at that moment my grandfather caught a glimpse of me just as I was preparing to leave the barn and started to take the jacket from me, but I had no intention of standing still and quietly letting him deprive me of all the pleasure which I had determined to have. No, I would make one last bold effort for the sake of the said lark, so as quick as thought I set off at as great a speed as possible, considering I had my legs through the sleeves of the jacket. My grandfather engaged in hot pursuit after me, and I venture to say there never was a more laughable sight. He caught me, however, and took my new fashioned pants from me, but not before we had a most delightful and invigorating run, in which run I was rather surprised to see my grandfather engage with the utmost suppleness, and seem to lose for a time all the stiffness of old age.

My grandfather was also a most notorious snuff-user. Now this black stuff always reminded me of soot, and supposing soot to be

just as good (indeed I have not yet had cause to alter my opinion,) I one day took a little box and filled it from the chimney. My grandfather-seeing me with it, and supposing it to be some of his beloved snuff, took the box from me with a sharp reproof for being so mischievous and (without the slightest attempt on my part to prevent him) emptied the contents of it into his own box, while I, all the time this was taking place, could hardly restrain my intense amusement, and I went off laughing to myself when the thought of how my good grandfather would look when he should discover his mistake. But it must not be supposed that I made my venerable old grandfather the subject of all my wicked pranks, for I was a nuisance to those around me in general.

Thus I lived on, sometimes staying at my grandfather's, at other times returning home and staying there awhile, until I reached the age of twelve years, when my father left the country with its green fields and pleasant shady lanes, and moved into the crowded smoky city of Wick, where he kept a grocery store. Not long after we went there the minister of the church which we attended called upon us, and seeing that I was deaf told my parents of an institution established for the education of the deaf and dumb. They were much gratified on receiving this piece of intelligence, as they had never before heard of such an institution, but had hitherto looked upon me with a sort of despair, supposing that there was no means whereby I might gain an education; and it was at once settled that I should go to school. My mother was soon busily engaged in supplying every comfort that her mind could suggest to make me comfortable while at school.

Soon all was ready and I was to start on my new career, little thinking that this was to be a turning point in my life, that thenceforth the current of my existence should run in entirely another direction, and would no longer flow as it had hitherto done, in quiet and undisturbed tranquility.

Upon starting for school I was placed under the care of a gentleman whose name I do not remember, and conveyed safely to Edinburgh, (about 200 miles from my home) where the school stood—tall and imposing. It was well built of grey sandstone and situated near the Donaldson Charity Institution, a splendid edifice of white sandstone and capable of accommodating about 500 persons, erected by a rich bachelor, named Donaldson.

When I reached the school I was kindly received by the Principal a man who despite his 78 years, was still hearty and cheerful. His name was Mr. Kinneburg, and he was at one time, I believe a minister of the church of England.

He was a very tall stout gentleman with a certain air of importance about him which at once deeply impressed my young mind. He wore a very long-tailed black coat, knee breeches and gaiters, some large, old-fashioned gold seals suspended on a black ribbon

dangled from his vest, and two or three gold rings glittered on his fingers. Another thing I also noticed was that one of his little fingers were missing. I afterwards learned that this was due to some of his own mischief, and it seemed strange to me that this strict important looking gentleman should ever have been a mischievous little urchin like myself, although, his appearance was such as would undoubtedly excite the hearty laughter of any school-boy of the present day. After I had finished gazing at him, I took a survey of the school room and its occupants, when to my delight I saw a large number of boys and girls, some of whom were near my own age and size, and some too, my quick eye readily detected were like myself, brimful of mischief.

I was perfectly charmed ; never before had I seen such a collection of boys and girls ranging from the tender age of 5 and 6, to manhood and womanhood.

But despite the disparity of age, size, and temperament, they were all alike in one respect—like myself not one could hear a sound, either pleasant or harsh—not one could utter a word of either love or hatred—a sad state dear reader you will say, but not so sad as you may imagine. While the deaf mute is deprived of two great senses, double power seems to have been given to the remaining. The "eye" is quick and sharp, the "feelings" acute and sensitive to a degree, at times almost painful, and although he cannot easily converse with those around him, a deaf man can almost read the thoughts of others in the various expressions of the face with that eye.

"An eye that seems to hear
E'en by observing, and that gathers more
From flickering lights and shadows of a face,
Than duller minds can gain from spoken words."

But I am wandering from my subject, to return to the school-room and its occupants, there were about 85 scholars attending at that time and besides the Principal there were four male and two female teachers employed.

In a short time I was duly established in the class for which my intellectual attainments qualified me, and soon becoming acquainted with the rest of the scholars, I was as happy as the day was long. On going to school I could only make known my thoughts by signs, but I quickly learned to talk with my fingers, thus being enabled to talk more freely and with much less difficulty.

So things went on in the usual routine of school life. Sometimes I would become tired of learning my lessons and try to get clear of them, but I soon learned that there was no mercy shown to lazy boys in that well-regulated school, so I resorted to another plan, that of feigning to be ill, but I was immediately sent to bed and a most shocking dose of salts were brought to me and I was forced to drink it. Ugh ! I have hated the sight of salts ever since, and you may be sure that I did not pretend to be sick again.

One of the most intimate acquaintances while at school was a fellow named Crowe. He had an immense hooked nose, and I used to be continually teasing him by telling him that he had a nose like a crow's bill. Many were the pranks I used to play upon him, all of which he generally received with the utmost good nature.

The matron of the school often bribed us scholars into doing little chores for her. One day she offered Crowe and me some bread and cheese (which by the way is very acceptable to a hungry school-boy) if we would do her a favor. I forget now what the nature of it was, at any rate we performed it. Crowe not being near, the bread and cheese was given to me to divide between us, but just then a wicked thought possessed me. I felt that I would dearly love to see how Crowe would look if I were to eat his share as well as my own, so in a short time all the bread and cheese had disappeared, and I went to inform Crowe of what I had done. My expectations were more than realized by seeing him get into a towering range, which was a very unusual thing for easy-going, good-natured Crowe to do. But this is only a very mild specimen of the scores of wicked plans which I was continually forming to amuse myself at the expense of someone else. Indeed, I have often since wondered that Crowe and I were such good friends when I was such a torment to him, and I can attribute it to nothing else except his excessive good nature. He was human, however, and would often get exceedingly angry at me, but we would soon be as good friends as ever, and forget all about our previous quarrels and disagreements. One day he was absent at dinner hour, and his dinner was set aside for him when he should return. Again the evil spirit of mischief took possession of me, and I coolly and deliberately ate every morsel of poor Crowe's dinner, and then waited impatiently for the fun which I expected to have when he returned. He came, and anyone can imagine his feelings when with his good appetite he discovered that his dinner had been eaten by someone else, and who was that some one else, was very easy for him to divine. He swallowed his rage, however, and left me very much disappointed at seeing him apparently so very little concerned about the loss of a good dinner, but he knew me well enough at this time to know how it delighted me to see anyone get into a passion, and by mastering his own feelings he had all the fun on his own side by witnessing my disappointment.

In the summer time we boys used to have to go about two miles out to Edinburgh to bathe. One day three or four of us elder boys raised a collection among ourselves and bought a bottle of whiskey. This we drank between us, and as may be supposed it made us all reeling drunk.

In this disgraceful condition we turned to go back to school, but on our way we met the Principal. He saw at once how matters stood, and I can remember the look of mortification and disgust

that came into his face as he passed by without noticing or appearing to know us at all, but when he had walked a short distance past he turned and followed us back to the school where we each got a hearty thrashing enough to destroy all the effect that the whiskey may have had on us, and we were despatched to bed without our supper. We carried ourselves straighter and more orderly after this scrape.

On the premises of the school was a workshop where three different trades were tanght—carpentry, tailoring and shoe-making; of those three trades every boy had his choice of the one he preferred, and at which he worked after school hours. I learned carpentry, at which I have worked ever since. We often used to take the chance when we were in the workshop, away from the eyes of our teachers, to steal out into the street, which, however, was forbidden under pain of a good thrashing.

But when boys see a chance for some good fun they generally do not think much of the consequences. So one day we all went out and were enjoying ourselves amazingly, when we were caught and told we were wanted in the schoolroom. There was not a boy there who did not tremble in his shoes as the thought of the punishment terrible to contemplate, and awful to endure, rose uppermost in his mind. All of the boys, excepting myself, went in at once, while I coward-like, hid in a small shed near by, hoping to escape my share of the punishment, but when the rest of the boys were assembled in the schoolroom, the question of "where is Tait?" was asked, no doubt in no very gentle tone; but as I was not forthcoming it was considered best that I should be looked after, so Crowe was sent in quest of me and in his search he came into the very shed where I was concealed, and after looking all around went out again without having noticed me. I remained in the shed until dark and then stole into the house and up to bed (without anyone seeing or molesting me) where I slept soundly and sweetly until morning, when to my surprise and relief the matter seemed to be entirely forgotten by the teacher if not by my companions, whose minds, I have no doubt, it would have eased, could they have given me a good thrashing themselves, since I had escaped the one given them. But my happy school days were drawing to a close, for after four years of study I returned home in vacation, and refused to go back to school again, as my father very much wished me to do, for he knew better than I how deficient my education was.

Often since have I wished that I had complied with his wishes and returned to school; and I know that there are many others who, neglecting their education in their youth, have lived to regret the day, when instead of storing their minds with useful knowledge to fit themselves for going out into the world in after life, have sadly frittered away the precious hours of their schooldays, and finally have left school with an education barely sufficient for them to write

their own names. Such an education should be contemptible in the eyes of every boy who has it within the limits of his power to obtain a better. But I was not wise enough then to see the importance of a good education, in one word I did not know enough to know I knew nothing. But my spirit, a naturally wild and roaming one, chafed under the restraint of a school room, and I longed for the time to come when my school days should be numbered with the things of the past, and I should be able to become a sailor and roam over lands and seas of which I had so often studied, and which I longed with my whole soul to see. And the lonely condition of my home since my mother's death (she had died when I was at school) increased the intensity of my longing for a sailor's life, and having gained my father's reluctant consent, I started off with my mind full of what I had heard of countries far across the sea.

America was to me a bright vision of silver and gold, and my heart was set upon reaching its shores, for I imagined that if I were once to reach its shores my fortune would be made. On leaving home I proceeded at once to Aberdeen, where I hired on board of a fine brig belonging to that place. We sailed to several ports in Scotland, England and Ireland; and even the hasty glimpses which I got of those places during our short visits delighted me, and yet more firmly fixed my resolve to travel the world over. I worked all the time with a will, for I was in my element and was happy; my mind was so filled with the wonders I was to see and the vast fortune I was to make, that I scarcely knew how my limbs often ached from the unaccustomed toil. Our brig was in London at the time of the great Exhibition of 1851. This I visited, and there I saw works of art and skill from all parts of the world. There I met with people of almost every tongue and nation, from the hardy Scotchman to the polite and fashionable Frenchman. After a short stay in London, during which time I had visited almost every place of interest in the city, we set sail for Calais, and while our brig remained there, I and others belonging to the ship went by rail to Paris. While in Paris I found ample amusement to beguile the hours of daylight roaming over the gay, fashionable, and splendid city with its fine buildings and tastefully laid out grounds. Indeed, I think that Paris is one of the finest cities that I have ever visited everything has such a bright sparkling appearance, nothing looks old or dingy. One day during our visit, one of the mates and I visited the Deaf and Dumb Institution in the city. I was surprised to see such a number of pupils. They were, however, all French, and speaking the French language we could not understand them; but the President, a pleasant, interesting sort of gentleman, who could converse fluently in both English and French, entertained us for some time by showing us through the school and explaining to us their rules and mode of teaching, after which we had some refreshments given us, when we went away well pleased with our

visit, but I was disgusted when I afterwards learned that the delicious pie of which we partook was prepared from the flesh of frogs. I did not think the refined Frenchman capable of eating that which a Scotchman would shudder to think of. I was also much amused at the extreme politeness which characterizes the manners of the French people, contrasting strongly with the abrupt burly Scotchman.

Leaving Paris we returned to Liverpool, England, where I left the brig, and after spending all my money—the fact that my pockets were empty suddenly dawned upon me—and it was quite evident that I must gain more employment, or I should, without doubt, starve, for there I stood utterly alone and friendless in that great bustling crowded city, and I could not turn now to my father for help as I used to do in former times of need, but I must henceforth depend entirely on my own exertions for support; and I confess that the thought came to me with something like a shock, and in one short hour I seemed to change from the gay, thoughtless boy, into the sober, calculating man; and summoning all my courage to my aid, I started to look for another ship, for I could think of none other then a sailor's life. After looking around for some time, I to my unbounded delight, found a ship preparing to sail for America.

I now felt sure that my wildest dreams were about to be realized. But when I went down into the cabin, were the captain sat reading and smoking, and proceeded to write to him on my slate, my heart sank within me when he told me that he was not allowed, under a heavy penalty, to take a person infirmed in any way out of England, without first having proper authority for so doing; but when he saw how anxious I was to go to America, he seemed to take a deeper interest in the seemingly forlorn and friendless boy, so, after a little deliberation, he decided to take me on board as assistant carpenter. He then dressed me in a suit of blue, blackened my face with soot to make me look like the grimy sailors, and sent me on deck with them, and when the Customs Officers came on board to examine the sailors, I was not noticed at all; for with my blue suit and sooty face, I looked very much like the rest of the crew, and soon to my delight they left, and we set sail, and before long I had lost sight of the land of my nativity, was rapidly being borne to the object of my day-dreams—the foundation of my most glorious air-castles. After a long and pleasant voyage, during which time I did not experience one spasm of that disagreeable sensation called sea-sickness, we came in sight of the West Indies, and then in a few days arrived safely in Jamaica. I found the heat there intense, to one not used to it almost unbearable.

On our arrival, we were again examined, and again I was passed over without my deafness being noticed. While in Jamaica we were engaged in discharging our cargo, and in taking in a fresh one for the English markets. The wharf was always filled with the

swathy natives. I made enquiries for a young and very handsome native who had attended the Edinburgh Institution, but could learn nothing of him, further than that it was supposed that he had been taken as a slave.

As soon as our cargo had been discharged, and a fresh one taken in, we again set sail; this time carrying several passengers. Among the number was a young Englishman, about my own age. We became acquainted, and spent many pleasant hours together talking of the fortunes which we expected to make, for he, like myself, was a fortune hunter. We soon arrived at New York; from thence we sailed to Boston, and from Boston to Maine, where I left my gallant brig, and that noble, generous captain. We were very sorry to part, but he gave me some good advice, and told me to cheer up and perhaps we would meet again, if not in this world perhaps in the next; but I have never seen that worthy captain since.

While in Maine I worked in a shipyard. One evening, after having tea, I left my boarding house to visit a friend who lived at some distance; when I left my friends to return it was rather late, and the night was pitchy dark, and had I not been well acquainted with the streets, I have no doubt that I should have been lost until daylight at any rate. But shortly after I had set out on my way back to my boarding house, a driver came up behind me. The intense darkness prevented either of us from noticing each other, and not being able to hear the sound of the carriage, I was not in the least conscious of anyone being on the street except myself, when I was suddenly knocked prostrate upon the ground, the horse and carriage passing over me.

I know not how long I lay thus, for I had been stunned from a blow which I received on the hand, and the driver of the carriage was either unconscious of the fact or else he had not enough humanity left in him to pay any attention to me after he had run over and stunned me, at any rate. When consciousness returned, I found myself still lying where I had so rudely been thrown, I knew not how long before.

With returning consciousness came a sense of terrible pain in the region of my left wrist, but it was evident that I ought not to lie there for fear some one else might be unscrupulous enough to play a similar trick upon me; so I slowly dragged myself along to the nearest house and, entering, explained my disagreeable situation. The occupants of the house were extremely kind, binding up my wrist, which was discovered to be broken, and doing all that day in their power for my relief; they then assisted me to my boarding house, where I at once procured a doctor, and had my wrist properly attented to, but it was four months before I was able to work again, and even then there was a disagreeable grating sensation in my wrist when I handled my tools while working.

While writing of this accident, I am reminded of a similar one which happened to me after I came to Halifax. I was just turning the corner of Granville and Blower Streets, when I was suddenly thrown down by a horse coming in the opposite direction, and no doubt would have been injured more severely than before, but for the little slate which I always carry in my pocket; it was in the breast pocket of my coat, almost over my heart. The horse set his hoof fairly upon it and smashed it to atoms. But fortuuately the Halifax driver was more humane than the one in Maine, and he immediately came to my assistance, but I received no injuries beyond a bad fright and a slight bruise upon my knee.

These slight injuries which might, however, have proved serious or even fatal, have been useful lessons to me in teaching me to be extremely careful when crossing streets at night, as indeed all deaf persons should be.

When I returned to my work in the shipyard, I was engaged in building a large ship which was to sail for California. The owners wished me to go on board as carpenter, and I would have done so with pleasure, but just at that time I learned through one of my fellow-workmen that an uncle of mine was living in Nova Scotia, so I declined going to California, and proceeded at once to write to my uncle. In due time I received an answer, asking me to come to Halifax at once. I started, going from Maine to St. John, N. B., in a sleigh; I went from St. John in a steamboat, as far as the ice would allow the boat to go; and then walked on the ice to Annapolis, and from Annapolis to Halifax I went in a sleigh. When I drove up to my uncle's door I could hardly suppress a smile at his surprise when he saw that I was deaf and dumb, for he had not known it before.

My uncle, who was a house carpenter, and carried on an extensive business, which employed a large number of workmen, employed me as one of the number.

I found the City of Halifax very small and quiet as compared with the large and populous cities, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, and other cities which I had visited. I was also surprised to see how strictly the Sabbath day was observed, and how quiet and free fram all broils and disturbances the streets were on that sacrrd day. But although Halifax is inferior to those large cities in size, population, &c., it has a harbor superior to any they can boast of.

Shortly after I came to Halifax I met with a gentleman at my boarding house who had a deaf and dumb child about twelve years of age. As she had never received any instruction, he begged me to teach her, and as he did not live in the city, he said he would send her to live with an aunt residing in the city. I was pleased to undertake her education, and when she was sent to Halifax I commenced without delay to instruct her during my leisure hours. This girl, Mary Ann Fletcher, was the first deaf and dumb person

who ever rec[illegible]d instruction in the City of Halifax. This was in the year 1856. But the generous heart of that little child would not allow her to rest satisfied with being taught herself alone, but she was continually urging me to gather together the other children in the city afflicted like herself, and teach them too. She manifested such concern for those who were like herself, but who had never been taught to read or write, that I caught the infection, and determined to do that which was within my limited power towards starting a school in Halifax for the education of the deaf and dumb. But how to commence I scarcely knew. It was quite evident that I had no time to devote to such a project, for I could not afford to throw up my present employment, as I would surely have to do were I to do justice to the work which I contemplated. After a good deal of thought about the matter, I decided that my best plan would be to get a teacher, and by assisting him during my leisure hours, I thought that we might after a time get along very well.

My plans seemed to be favored, for one day as I was walking along the street I noticed a man and woman talking with their fingers; it was evident that one of them was deaf and dumb, and as they appeared to be in a starving condition, I approached and commenced to talk with them. The poor fellow seemed pleased to find some one who could talk to him, and immediately commenced to tell me a most pitiful story of want and woe. I learned that the woman who was with him was his wife, and that they had one child. He told me too that he had left Scotland with the intention of going to his brother, who lived in the United States, but that he had been landed in Halifax. Friendless and almost penniless, he found it impossible to get sufficient imployment to maintain himself. I went with him to his lodgings, which consisted of one room scantily furnished, or not furnished at all, for the only thing in the shape of furniture that I could see was a miserable bed and a few dishes. He told me that his name was Gray. I knew the name for I had heard of him before I had left Scotland. He had received his education at the Edinburgh institution, and the thought occurred to me that if I could collect the scholars, this man might teach them, as he had nothing else to do. I proposed my plans to him. He sympathized with them in every respect, and promised to teach as well as he could any who might wish to learn. Then after supplying him with some of the necessaries of which he stood so much in need, I left him and commenced at once to look for scholars and collect something for the school from any whose sympathies might be enlisted in our cause. Friends seemed to spring up on every side, and in a very short time I had made a collection amounting to $160, with which we furnished a room on Argyle Street. The school opened with two scholars. This small number gradually increased, and in course of time there was quite a room full. Thus, that little room with its few scholars formed the nucleus or beginning of the fine Institution of to-day.

The late Andrew McKinlay, Esq., proved himself to be a most valuable friend. Assisting and advising us in many ways he became Secretary and Treasurer, for besides what was left of the $160 after furnishing the schoolroom there was always money on hand given us by some kind friend in aid of the school. When the number of pupils had so increased as to render the room which he had occupied till now incapable of accommodating them all, the friends and directors of the school procured a large room and sent to Scotland for a teacher, as Mr. Gray was not capable of supplying the place of a first-class teacher.

Before long the present Institution was purchased and repaired and enlarged in different ways.

There are now a large number of pupils attending the school, many of them going home every year during vacation. They come from all parts of Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. The school is a great blessing, for without it the deaf child would remain in utter mental dullness and ignorance. rance.

After a time I began to get tired of boarding, and determined to go to sea again; and as there were relations of mine living in Australia, I had concluded to go there, when by mere chance I became acquainted with a young lady with whom I at once fell in love, and instead of embarking on the deep blue Atlantic, I embarked on the sea of matrimony, and finally settled down in the quiet humdrum of married life, without having accomplished one hundreth part of what I had intended to do, viz., to travel the world over. Ah! I had by this time discovered that the world was a larger place than I had at first supposed it to be. My wife could both hear and speak; yet at the same time could converse with her fingers with as much ease and quickness as with her lips. After I had been married for about 13 years, and a swarm of children had gathered around my knee, I became desirious of again visiting my native land, so I procured a passage on board the "City of Halifax." The passage was a pleasant one; no storms were encountered, and everything went smoothly (after the horrors of the first night were over). I had gone to bed and was sleeping soundly, lulled by the gentle rolling of the ship, when I was suddenly awakened by some one feeling over my head. I sprang up in bed and met the bloodshot eyes of a drunken sailor who had staggered into my room. He held in his hand an open knife which he raised above his head in a threatening attitude. I grasped his arm but not in time to avoid altogether the descent of the knife, which struck my shoulder, cutting through my clothes and slightly injuring the flesh. However, by dint of a good deal of coaxing, I succeeded in getting him out of the room, and then I fastened the door. The rest of the voyage was accomplished in peace, and I once more stood on Scotland soil.

I proceeded at ance to my father's store and entered—"But,

was that old man with the bent form and snowy hair, my father?" I had not thought of seeing any change in him. He did not know me, however, and the joy that would naturally shine in a father's eyes when he recognizes a long absent child was not seen in his. He looked upon me as he would look upon an utter stranger. Yet how could it be expected that he should see in the bearded man before him, any resemblance to the slight youth of 16, who had left his home more than twenty years before. I then made myself known to him. He was greatly rejoiced to see me, and, after a hearty greeting, he took me into the house. *It* looked quite natural and home-like, for although I had been absent so long I had not forgotten what my old home looked like It was but little changed; all the change seemed to have taken place in the occupants themselves.

The brothers and sisters whom I left at home children, were now grown to manhood and womanhood. I also found brothers and sisters whom I had never seen before, for my father had married again during my absence. I spent a very happy time during the summer visiting my friends and relations. I also hunted up some of my old schoolmates and had a chat with them. To one of them whom I visited, I did not tell my name. I merely said that I was an old school fellow, and we were spending a most delightful time together, talking of old times and the many scrapes and adventures of our schooldays, when he asked me if I knew what had become of that black curly headed fellow named "Tait," who used to be such a mischievous rascal. I could not help laughing at his surprise, when I told him that that person was now before him. Shortly after my arrival my father became suddenly very ill. He had been out taking a walk, and when he got home, was scarcely able to reach his own room, which he never left again, but died after a few days suffering. And it was with a thankful heart that I had been permitted to see my dear father once more, that I sorrowfully followed his remains to their last resting place, the last tribute of respect which we can pay the dearest earthly friend.

When the summer began to wane, and the autumn leaves were falling, I prepared to return home. The voyage back was not so pleasant as the one out had been, we encountered several storms. One very heavy one, the water lashed the ship, and the day became dark as night. In the fury of the storm I was washed overboard and narrowly escaped being drowned. We also passed a huge iceberg on our way, when the warm genial air of the early autumn was suddenly changed to cold chillness of winter.

My family were not in Halifax when I arrived, and I proceeded at once to the country, where they were spending the summer. I came in upon them just as they were having a delicious feast of corn The corn was forgotten and I was immediately surrounded by a laughing, dancing group of children, glad to see "Father" at home once more, and I felt that although I had not gained the immense fortune I had

once dreamed of, I had a far greater blessing than any amount of money could buy, viz.: A HAPPY, LOVING FAMILY. Shortly after this we left Halifax and moved to Dartmouth, where I built a house, in which I still live.

I was lately engaged as a pattern maker in the Skate Factory, which is an extensive manufactory, where a large number of men are employed. It is there "Forbes' Patent Acme Club Skates" are manufactured. These skates are known all over the world.

Since writing the foregoing, I have been deprived of employment, owing to the very depressed state of business, and have, as I have stated in my preface, been unwillingly forced to sell this little book as a means of support. Since I have commenced selling it I have travelled over the greater part of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, and have visited New Brunswick, Quebec, Montreal and Boston. During this summer I have sold 3,000 copies. I sold very few in Canada; but never having been there before, I enjoyed my visit very much. There are some fine buildings indeed in Montreal and Quebec; a great many of the inhabitants are French. I was glad to find St. John being so rapidly built up after the late disastrous fire.

With my visit to Yarmouth I was particularly pleased. and I like the people exceedingly. Fredericton, N. B., I think a very pleasant city, with its broad level streets lined with green trees. By the way, I think the people of Halifax might take pattern by the said city, so far as clean streets are concerned at any rate. I was quite surprised on arriving at Charlottetown, P. E. I., to find it such a large town, the people of the place are I think enterprising and industrious, and the town bids fair to be a large and thriving one. Besides those places already mentioned, I visited many others of smaller size and less note, such as Woodstock, Shediac, Amherst, Chatham, Newcastle, and others. In Pictou I met with a great many Scotch people, all of whom readily purchased my book.

I met with similar success in Truro, Digby, Kentville, Annapolis, Lunenburg, and many other places which I visited during a tour of five months.

In Halifax and Dartmouth I have sold a large number. I have also within the past few days sold quite a number to the members of the House of Assembly. And with this hurried account I shall close my book for the present, and perhaps after returning from another tour which I intend shortly to make I will give my readers a fuller and more satisfactory account.

Now, dear reader, my story is ended up to the present, and if I have succeeded in eliciting your sympathy in favor of the "Children of Silence," it will not be altogether a failure.

EXTRACT from an American Report, stating the early History of the different Deaf and Dumb Schools on the Continent of Europe. Also a short History of the early American Deaf and Dumb Teachers

In the year 1776 there existed but three schools for the deaf and dumb in the world, and they numbered, in the aggregate, less than forty pupils. One was the establishment of the celebrated Abbe Charles Michel de L'Eppe, situated on the heights of Montmatre, in the outskirts of Paris, and supported through the practice of the most careful economy, by the income of his own moderate patrimony. He is properly regarded as the father of the French system of deaf mute education. The fundamental idea that led to the method he adopted, was, according to his own statement, "There is no more natural and necessary connection between abstract ideas and the articulate sounds which strike the ear than there is between the same ideas and the written characters that address themselves to the eye." This principle, generally regarded at the time as a solecism in philosophy, led him to enquire as to the best means of conveying a knowledge of the significance and use of written language to the mind of a congenital deaf mute. After much observation and reflection, he came to the conclusion that the most obvious instrument for effecting his purpose was the natural pantomime which grew out of the modes of thought of one born deaf, enlarged in its scope, and methodized in its arrangement. Commencing his labors in the instruction of the deaf and dumb about the year 1775, with two young girls whose pitiable condition touched his heart, he taught successive classes till his death, in the year 1789, at the age of 77. Two years after this, the school which he founded was adopted by the national government of France, and has continued under its care and surveilance ever since.

Another of those schools was in Germany, under the charge of a self-made man named Samuel Heincke, who, in 1754, while stationed as a private soldier at Dresden, had employed some of his leisure time in developing the mind of an indigent deaf and dumb boy, an experiment interrupted by the seven years war. Supporting himself, after the close of this conflict, at the University of Jena, by his skill in music, he repaired, on his graduation, to the village of Eppendorf, near Hamburg, and engaged in teaching a school for hearing youth. Here he found another deaf mute, who at once became to him an object of absorbing interest. Other deaf mutes soon found their way to his benevolent ministrations, and relinquishing his hearing pupils, he devoted his whole time to their instruction.

Such was his success that it attracted the notice of the enlightened Prince Frederick Augustus, the elector of Saxony, who in 1778 invited him to Leipsic with his nine pupils and established him at the head of the first institution ever supported at the public expense. In this to him most acceptable position he remained twelve years, laboring with zeal so disproportioned to his strength that his career was prematurely terminated by death in 1790, when he had reached the age of sixty-one. As the recognized father of the German system however, he still lives in the persons of his followers, and the institution of which he was director will two years hence, celebrate its own centennial anniversary.

The principle which guided him was the opposite of that which had been adopted by De L'Epee. "The written word," he wrote, "is only the representation of articulate sound. It addressed itself to the eye, and can never be imprinted on the soul or become the medium of thought. This is the sole prerogative of the voice. Without an acquaintance with spoken language, a deaf mute child can never become more than a writing machine, or have anything beyond a succession of images passing through his mind." He accordingly devoted himself to the cultivation of vocal speech on the part of the deaf, regarding it as the point of departure in all his efforts in their behalf.

The schoool remaining to be mentioned in this connection is that of the Braidwoods, father and son, established near Edinburgh, Scotland, at a country place which, from the fact of its being occupied for the instruction of the deaf and dumb, came to be called Dumbiedikes, a name immortalized by Sir Walter Scott in his Heart of Midlothian. Of this school, Dr. Samuel Johnstone, in his Journey to the Hebrides, thus remarks: "There is one subject of philosophical curiosity to be found in Edinburgh which no other city has to show, a college of the deaf and dumb. The number of pupils is about twelve. They are taught by Mr. Thomas Braidwood, and their improvement is wonderful; they not only speak, write and understand what is written, but it is an expression scarcely figurative to say they hear with the eye. * * * It was pleasing to see one of the most desparate of human calamities capable of so much help. Whatever enlarges hope will exalt courage. After seeing the deaf taught arithmetic, who would be afraid to cultivate the Hebrides?"

Thomas Braidwood, according to that rare old work "Vox oculis Subjecta," London, 1783, began the instruction of the deaf and dumb with one pupil, the son of an eminent merchant of Leith, and about 1770, associated his son John with himself in the conduct of an academy for the benefit of this class of learners. The author, Francis Green, sent his son Charles to this establishment in February, 1780, and in May 1781, and September 1782, spent several weeks in visiting it. The evidence furnished by his testimony, and that of many others, goes to establish the fact that these two men, whatever may

be thought of their theory and practice, were endowed with a tact, ingenuity and zeal that brought them as much success as could possibly be realized from the methods they pursued.

The academy was, in 1783, removed to Hackney, near London, where the elder Braidwood died in 1806; but the school was maintained by his widow and grandchildren til. 1816, when it ceased to exist as a separate establishment.

Thomas Braidwood's views of the importance of teaching vocalization to the deaf may be inferred from his declaration "articulate or spoken language hath so great and essential a tendency to confirm and enlarge ideas above the power of written language, that it is almost impossible for deaf persons, without the use of speech, to be perfect in their ideas. He, however, as we infer from the practice of his nephew, Joseph Watson, LL.D., who was appointed first principal of the London asylum in 1792, made use of signs of action, including signs purely natural and others more or less arbitrary grafted on them, and also of the two hand manual alphabet. He also believed in the graduation of difficulties and taking up one at a time. In this sense he may be said to have marked out a course intermediate between those of Heinicke and De L'Epee, equivalent, in some respects to a combination of the two, though it is evident that he did not derive any suggestion from either. He differed from both these eminent men, however, in putting a commercial value upon his art. The prices he charged for instruction were very high, and though a very few poor children were allowed to derive benefit from his labors, his special ministrations were given to the children of the rich. Both he and his family refused to impart a knowledge of their possesses except for a large pecuniary consideration. Still through his nephew, Dr. Watson, already mentioned, through his grandson, Thomas Braidwood, and through Mr. Robert Kinniburg, his pupil, who became severally masters of incorporated institutions at London, Birmingham and Edinburg, as well as the teachers they have trained, his methods have become perpetuated, with more or less strictness to this day, so that he may, with propriety, be called the immediate father of the English system.

It is not to be inferred, however, from what has been said, that the three schools mentioned as furnishing the starting point for the great development of the work which has been made during the century we are considering, are entitled to any commendation further, than that of doing for numbers what had been done equally well before for individuals, nor that all three of these founders were either the inventors or discoverers of the peculiar methods which they adopted. To De L'Eppe, indeed must be awarded the merit of true originality—the originality of common sense, it is true—in that he simply recognized in his philosophy what now seems to be an axiom, and in his practice that which his pupils naturally suggested to him in all their efforts to express their ideas, but still unique and

noteworthy, in that it was a departure from all the received notions of his day. Even he, however, owed to a Spanish teacher who appeared nearly one hundred and fifty years before his time, the single-handed manual alphabet, which, however, has been identified with the name of De L'Eppe, because we find it in general use only among his followers.

Heinicke, on the contrary, had the merit of only making skilful adaptations of the plan of John Conrad Amman, a physician in Holland, who wrote a book entitled *Surdas Loquens* (Amsterdam, 1692). A copy of this work fell into his hands, when he undertook the instruction of his first pupil, and gave direction to his subsequent views and methods. Amman placed an extravagant estimate upon the efficacy of speech, attributing to it a mysterious power altogether beyond what is consistent with the teaching of philosophy. He was the first practical teacher of the deaf and dumb in Holland, though he was able to pursue this work only in the intervals of professional leisure, and with a view, it would seem, rather to establish his theories and interest others of his benevolent scheme than to found a school of his own. After his death no one was found to continue the work in his native land, and more than a century elapsed before any effort was made to revive it.

Braidwood, in like manner, was indebted to John Wallis, L.L. D., professor of mathematics in the University of Oxford, a man of profound erudition, and of extraordinary philosophical acumen, who is acknowledged by common consent to have been the earliest teacher of the deaf and dumb in Great Britain. To him their case presented itself in the light of a most interesting problem. In 1653 he published a Latin work on the English grammar to which was prefixed a treatise on the formation of all articulate sounds. This he designed for the use of foreigners studying the English language, and the application of his theory to the instruction of the deaf and dumb probably never occurred to him till the year 1616, when he became interested in a youth named Daniel Whaley, son of the mayor of Northampton, who became deaf at the age of five years, but had lost all knowledge of spoken language. Him he taught to read, to write and to speak in a way greatly to gratify the Royal Society before which he exhibited his pupil at a meeting held May 31, 1662, and also His Majesty King Charles I., at Whitehall, together with His Highness Prince Rupert and diverse others of the nobility, who were so much interested that they sent for Dr. Wallis, and required him to exhibit the attainments of his pupil on several different occasions. He also educated Alexander Popham, "a young gentleman of very good family and fair estate, who from his birth did want his hearing." These seemed to have been the only cases which he instructed in articulation, though he continued to teach the deaf and dumb for some fifty years, never undertaking more than one or two at a time. He published very full accounts of his possesses in the philosophical

transactions of the Royal Society (1670-1691) and also in the fifth and sixth editions of his grammar. He used as one of his instruments of communication a double-handed manual alphabet, which seems to have been the original of the alphabet now used in Great Britain, an engraving of which first appears in Daniel DeFoe's history of the Life and Adventures of Duncan Campbell, a deaf mute, of whom he says, that he was educated by a clergyman who had become familiar with Dr. Wallis' writings, and had enjoyed the advantage of personal intercourse with him. The work which was published in 1720, contains a chapter devoted to an explanation of the manner in which this was accomplished, which, says the author, "is mostly taken out of the ingenious Dr. Wallis; and lying hid in that book, which is rarely enquired after, and too scarcely known, died in a manner with that great man."

Contemporary with Wallis, and enjoying his friendship, was George Delgarno, master of the grammar school at Oxford, who wrote a book of great learning, entitled Didascolocyphus, or the deaf and dumb man's tutor, published in 1660, a work held in respect by teachers, and often consulted by them even at this day. Dalgarno discarded articulation as unessential in the instruction of the deaf and dumb. He was the inventor of an alphabet in which the consonants were considered as located between the articulation of one hand, with the vowels at the tips of the fingers, and which were to be touched by the thumb and index fingers of the other. It is conjectured, not without reason, that Dalgarno and Wallis were of mutual assistance to each other in developing the theory of deaf mute instruction, which, with the former, was simply an intellectual recreation, while the latter gave it practical effect. Previous to Dalgarno and Wallis, the earliest writer on the subject in England was Dr. John Bulwer, who, in 1644, published "Chiralogia, or the natural language of the hand," and in 1648, "Philocophus, or the deaf and dumb man's friend," both of which are interesting speculations. But anterior to the earliest writer in England, and long before the earliest teacher, was Pedro Ponce De Leon, a monk of the order of the Benedictines in the Convent of Ona, Spain, where he died in 1684. The success of his labours was vouched for by at least three contemporary writers, one of whom, Ambrose Moralez, a Spanish historian, speaks of him as one of the most remarkable men of his age. He is supposed to have commenced his labors in the year 1550. Some thirty or thirty-five years after his death, all trace of his labors seems to have disappeared except in the casual mention to which allusion has been made, and scarcely anything would now be known of him but for an account of his labors, he left in an act for a foundation for a chapel, executed in 1558, and long afterwards discovered among the archives of the convent. At this period appeared Juan Pablo Bonet, who wrote the first book in regard to the method of instructing the deaf and dumb ever published, an

analysis of which, from the pen of the late Dr. H. P. Peet, was contributed to the American Annals of July, 1851, and he elsewhere says of its author, that, "with this exception (the employment of pictures) he seems to have successfully employed all the methods now used in this branch of instruction. In reading his book we are reminded that an art, in its first elements, is often more nearly conformed to sound philosophy than it becomes in the hands of subsequent innovators. * * * The parent or friend of a deaf mute who should wish to begin at home the education of a child, cannot do better than to follow the method laid down by Bonet—explaining the names of visible objects by pointing to them; verbs, by performing the actions they represent; other ideas of explanations and scenes in pantomime, and the general construction of simple sentences, questions, answers and narratives, by continual usage, by means of the manual alphabet and writing." The success which attended Bonet's labors was, as may be supposed, very considerable, though he never had more than one or two pupils at a time. It should be added that the manual alphabet which he employed, and probably invented, is the same precisely, in about two-thirds of its letters, as that adopted by the Abbe De L'Eppe, and in none of the remaining letters, except the D and R, is there any essential difference. Another teacher contemporary with Bonet, was Ramirez Emmanuel De Carion, who survived his co-laborer about thirty years. After his death no further effort was made to instruct the deaf and dumb in Spain, until the year 1796, when it was revived by Alea, a disciple De L'Eppe, who opened a school for deaf mutes at Madrid, and though Spain has a population of over 12,000,000, of whom 12,000 are deaf mutes, there are at this day but two institutions in her borders; and it is a remarkable fact that of the 238 institutions now existing in the different countries of the world, with the single exception of the Paris National Institution, which is the same on another foundation, with the private school of De L'Eppe, there is not one that has not been founded since 1776.

In Great Britain and Ireland there were twenty-three, which, in their methods, may be regarded as belonging to the school of Braidwood, though they generally reject articulation as an incumbrance.

The institution in London was founded by the Rev. John Townsend, a minister of the congregational order in London, and on the 14th of November, 1792, was opened with four pupils. Mr. Townsend began to take subscriptions on the 1st of June, 1792, and by the aid of others, whom he enlisted in the enterprise succeeded in securing for it a generous support In the years 1808, 1809 and 1810, he travelled thousands of miles, preaching in different places, and collecting £6,000 as a permanent fund for the society. This fund was afterwards increased until, in 1844, it amounted to £140,000 or $700,000, and is much larger probably at the present time The pupils are selected for admission by a vote of the Governors

who are limited in number, being composed of those who pay one guinea per annum, with the privilege of an additional vote for every additional guinea subscribed, many of its most liberal supporters being personages of the highest rank. The first teacher selected was Joseph Watson, a nephew of Braidwood, who had dedicated himself to the education of the deaf and dumb. In the year 1809 he published a treatise on his art, which secured for him the degree of LL. D., from the University of Glasgow. He died in 1836, and has since been succeeded, as Principal, by his son, and subsequently by his grandson. Among the distinguished teachers in Great Britain, in addition to those already mentioned, the names of the late Duncan Anderson, of Glasgow, and Charles Baker, of Doncaster, deserve special mention, while that of David Buxton, the present head of the school in Liverpool, is especially prominent among living instructors. The school of De L'Eppe is now represented in the continent of Europe by fifty institutions in France, fifteen in Italy, two in Spain and one in Portugal, all of which adopt his methods to a greater or less degree. His immediate and most distinguished successor at Paris was the Abbe Sicard, and among the most distinguished professors have been Bebian, Morel, Berthier and Vaisse. M. Vaisse was the only practical instructor at the head of the institution after the time of Sicard, the other individuals intrusted with its management having been selected for political reasons, a circumstance which has greatly limited the usefulness of the institution, as the teachers were practically left without a directing head. The French, Italian, Spanish, and Portugese schools have been supported by their respective governments.

The school of Heinicke is represented by thirty institutions in Germany, fifty in Austria, ten in Belgium and Holland, five in Denmark, Sweden and Norway, and three in Russia, although a number of the institutions, especially those in Holland, Sweden and Norway, have adopted what may properly be called the combined method, which consists in using signs as an instrument of instruction in language and articulation as a means of expression. One characteristic of all the schools is that they reject the manual alphabet, though there is an increasing disposition even in the most pronounced articulating schools, to use gestures, which are the most necessary, as they find there is a large and increasing number of their pupils who can derive no benefit from the efforts made to teach them to speak and read on their lips. The total number under instruction in the 195 institutions of Great Britain and Europe has been estimated at from 5,000 to 6,000, a contrast indeed to the forty that were under instruction at the beginning of the period whose progress we are considering. The characteristics of the French teachers are an unbounded enthusiasm and a close analysis of language and ideas. Those of the Italian are great, particularly in instructing their pupils in religious and ecclesiastical history, and

tenets, and also a remarkable development in the arts of designs, architecture, sculpture, drawing, painting and engraving, many of the pupils showing remarkable proficiency in these respects. All of the teachers being members of religious orders, their services are rendered gratuitously. The Abbe Pendola is the most remarkable man among them. The German teachers are remarkable for their devoted faithfulness, their extensive reading, and their philosophic research, and hold a most respectable position among the learned men of their country, a remark which may be applied with equal truth to the teachers in Holland. Among the latter the brothers Guyot and Canton Hirsch are men notable both within and without their profession.

It is on the continent of America, however, and within the borders of the United States, that the art has reached its fullest development. The first deaf mute of whom we have any record in this country was the son of Francis Green, Esq., then of Boston, afterwards of New York, of whom it has already been said that he placed his son at the Braidwood Academy. In the early days after the revolutionary war, he wrote a number of contributions to the newspapers of Massachusetts, signed "Philocophus," but from the fact that there was no prominent man who had any personal interest in the matter, the seed which he sowed did not bear immediate fruit. It reserved under Providence to another father, twenty years later, to give the impetus needed to a work, the importance and benevolence of which all acknowledged when they became familiar with the deplorable condition of the uneducated deaf mute, and thus receive positive proof that he is capable of such development as to make an intelligent, self-dependent, well informed member of the community capable of expressing his ideas in written and sometimes in spoken language, and of comprehending the written communications of others. The daughter of Dr. Mason F. Cogswell, an eminent physician in Hartford, Conn., had the misfortune to suffer total loss of hearing as the result of a disease then known as spotted fever, but of late years greatly dreaded under the name of cerebro spinal meningitis. Parental love tried every expedient for alleviating the condition of the child, but was settling down into the sad belief that in the holiest and tenderest relations of the soul, there must ever be a wide chasm, isolating the child. It chanced, however, one day, that Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, son of a neighbour and friend, a young clergyman, who had recently carried off the highest honors at the Andover Theological Seminary, as he had previously done at Yale College, chanced, in passing, to see little Alice Cogswell playing in the garden, and attracted by her bright and winning ways, endeavored to establish some communication with her. Before he had left the garden he had actually succeeded in teaching her the word *hat*. From this he proceeded, in subsequent visits, to teach her to write the names of other objects, and even little sentences. As

hope animated the mind of the father, he began to make inquiries as to what had been done for the deaf and dumb abroad, and as his information on the subject increased, he ascertained that there were a number of deaf mutes in the State of Connecticut, who, like his daughter, were entirely without education. Through his efforts a few gentlemen assembled at Hartford and decided that it was expedient to send some one abroad to learn the process of instruction there employed, and undertake the education of the deaf and dumb in this country. Their choice naturally fell upon Mr. Gallaudet, who on the 25th of May, 1815, embarked for Europe, and proceeding to London, at once made application to Dr. Watson, of the London institution, for permission to attend the exercises of his school, and make himself familiar with the process employed. He found, however, that the rules of the institution were such that this could not be permitted, except upon terms with which Mr. Gallaudet found it impossible to comply. He then went to Edinburgh, and sought from the Rev. Robert Kinniburgh, principal of the institution there, the privileges which he had been denied in London. Here he found the same influences at work to frustrate his efforts. Mr. Kinniburgh had, like Dr. Watson, received his own license to teach only on condition that he would not impart a knowledge of the art to any one designing to establish a separate institution. On his return to London proposals were made to Mr. Gallaudet to employ a member of the Braidwood family then visiting America, but this he feared would be inexpedient. While he was thus tossed on a sea of doubt and anxiety, he had the good fortune to meet in London the Abbe Sicard, who had brought with him his two celebrated pupils, Massieu and Clerc, for the purpose of demonstrating the value of his process. Becoming very much interested in Mr. Gallaudet's project he at once invited him to Paris, and Mr. Gallaudet, satisfied of the superiority of this system of its results, most heartily accepted the invitation, under the feeling that he had been guided by a special Providence, overruling his own plans for the benefit of those whose welfare he was endeavoring to promote. We find him accordingly in Paris, where he remained from March 9 to June 16, 1816.

The time of his sojourn was very much shortened by his obtaining the consent of the Abbe Sicard to Mr. Clerc's accompanying him in this country, and in June, 1816, he set sail for America, arriving in New York on the 9th of August. In the meantime an act of incorporation, under the style of the "Connecticut Asylum for deaf and dumb persons," had been obtained from the Legislature of Connecticut. The eight months succeeding their arrival was spent by Mr. Gallaudet and Clerc in visiting different cities in New England, New York and Pennsylvania, and in obtaining subscriptions. On the 15th of April, 1817, the asylum was opened in a rented house in Hartford, with a class of seven pupils. In March, 1819, through the efforts of Hon. Nathaniel Terry and Hon. Thos. S.

Williams, an act was passed by both houses of Congress, granting to the asylum a township of land consisting of more than 23,000 acres, in the then new State of Alabama, and in the same year the title was changed, by the Act of the Legislature of Connecticut, to that of the "American Asylum," it being thought that one institution would meet the necessities of the country. The lands were located with excellent judgment, and sold to great advantage by Wm. Fly, Esq., who was made commissioner of the fund thus created. In the year 1839 this fund amounted to $278,100, including real estate, and amounts at the present time to $338,925. This has enabled the asylum to contribute more than one-third to the cost of maintaining the pupils, thus diminishing the expense to the Legislature and individuals availing themselves of the benefit it confers. The six New England States and the State of South Carolina have been the principal patrons. The State of Connecticut made it a grant of $5,000 in 1815, and has supported beneficiaries in the asylum from the time of its opening until the present. In 1825 the Legislature of the remaining New England States followed its example. The organization of the asylum was originally in two departments—one, that of a home under a superintendent; the other, that of a school under a principal. The title of superintendent was afterwards changed to that of steward, and still later to that of family guardian and steward. The early teachers selected by Dr. Gallaudet were men of remarkable ability and finished education, and the example thus set has been followed by all institutions which have since been established in this country, under the belief that a work of such importance and intrinsic difficulty could thus be carried on with far greater advantage than with teachers of merely ordinary qualifications. The result has been that what has been called the American system has been brought to a degree of perfection that was not anticipated when the American asylum was founded. As, however, deaf mutes of more than usual intelligence and attainments have been trained in the different institutions, it has been found advisable to make use of their rare ability to make an impression upon the minds of their companions in misfortune, in the teaching of a portion of the classes. Those early teachers also enjoyed the rare advantage of obtaining, through Mr. Clerc, a system of pantomime, remarkable for its vividness and grace. Mr. Gallaudet himself had a very remarkable skill in the use of this instrument, in expressing ideas. He was the first to introduce regular religious exercises into an institution of the deaf and dumb, on week days and on Sabbath, if we except the Paris Institution, where mass is celebrated once a week. The permanent building of the asylum was completed in 1821, and the service of dedication took place on the twenty-second of May of that year. On the 22nd of April, 1830, in consequence of failing health, Mr. Gallaudet tendered his resignation to the directors, and retired from his office

as principal on the first of the following November, when he was succeeded by Lewis Weld, Esq., one of his early associates and disciples. His ability as a writer and thinker received fitting recognition from Trinity College, which, in the year 1832, conferred upon him the degree of LL. D. He died on the 10th of September, 1851, at the age of sixty-one. Thousands of deaf mutes in the country who had been directly or indirectly benefitted by his labors were inspired by this event to enter at once upon contribution funds towards the erection of a monument to his memory, and the ceremonies attending its completion took place at the American asylum, the scene of his labors, on the 6th of September, 1854. The design of this memorial stone was by Albert Newsam, a distinguished deaf mute engraver; but one of the most attractive features was a sculptured group on the seventh panel, in which Dr. Gallaudet is represented as teaching little children the manual alphabet. The postures and expressions of the figures are of rare beauty, and do great credit to the genius of John Carlin, a distinguished deaf mute artist of New York, who originated the conception. With its companion monument, subsequently erected by the deaf mutes of the country of Laureat Clerc, who died at Hartford, July 18th, 1866, it forms a very beautiful ornament to the grounds of the asylum.

Dr. Gallaudet has been called the De L'Eppe of America, but while his title is in one sense appropriate, both by suggestions that he did for this country what De L'Eppe did for France, Italy, and Spain, and by reminding us that he was indebted to that great man for those fundamental ideas which characterized the French system, still, as he furnished to the world a new point of departure, from which has proceeded a system with peculiarities all its own, the historian will be inclined to assign him a separate and independent place, as he presents the representative names of Braidwood, De L'Eppe, Heinicke, Gallaudet.

Since the time of Dr. Gallaudet, forty-nine institutions have been established, all but four of which may be regarded as owing their existence and their methods to his influence. Of these New York has seven, Illinois two, Ohio two, Pennsylvania three, and every other State in the Union one, with the exception of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Delaware, Florida and Nevada. The first four named send their pupils to Hartford; New Jersey sends hers to any institution that may be selected by the Governor, but principally to New York and Pennsylvania, and Delaware to the District of Columbia. The number of pupils actually under instruction on the 1st December, 1875, was 4,440, about half the number under instruction in the whole world. Some six of these institutions have high class in which the higher branches of education are taught, and there is connected with the institution in the District of Columbia a college,

which receives as students graduates of the other institutions. This is the only institution to which appropriations are made by the general government, the several States making provision for the education of their own deaf mute beneficiaries as a part of the common school system, the institution being responsible, in most instances, to the State Superintendents of Public Instruction. Their immediate government is intrusted to boards of trustees or directors, which select the principal or superintendent, make by-laws, direct and control the expenditures, and exercise a vigilant guardianship through frequent visitations. Heinicke, however, is followed in an institution established in New York City in 1867, entitled, "The New York Institution for the Improved Instruction of Deaf Mutes," its principal teachers having been associated with the distinguished Mr. Deutsch, of the Jewish institution in Vienna. In this connection it may not be out of place to say that Braidwood is also represented in the Clark Institution for the Deaf and Dumb in Northampton, Mass., where the distinctive principals he advocated seemed to have been followed. This institution was also founded in 1867, having been endowed with a large fund for its support by the late John Clarke, Esq., who took a peculiar interest in the deaf and dumb.

The New York institution may be regarded as having been as independent in its origin as that of Hartford. In 1816 William Lee, Esq., on his return from Bordeaux, France, where he had been consul, brought a letter from Mr. F. Card, the distinguished pupil of the Abbe St. Sarnin, the directors of the institution of that place. The letter was written in excellent English, which Mr. Card had studied, and was addressed to "Philanthropists of the United States," and contained an offer of himself as teacher of the deaf and dumb, and Mr. Lee handed it to Samuel L. Mitchell, M. D., a celebrated physician in this city, who had attained a great reputation as a man of learning and benevolence. Dr. Mitchell's sympathies were at once aroused, and he conversed with Rev. John Stanford, chaplain of the alms-house, who had met a number of deaf mutes in the course of the ministrations, and with Dr. Samuel Ackerly, whom he knew as a man with a heart open to every call of benevolence. These three gentlemen called a meeting at the house of Rev. John Stanford, at which were present, besides themselves, Jones Mapes, Elisha W. King, John B. Scott, Silvanus Miller, R. Wheaton, James Palmer, Nicholas Rooms, and Rev. Alexander McLeod. The meeting resulted in another, more public at Tammany Hall, at which the feasibility of instructing the deaf and dumb was demonstrated by evidence which Dr. Mitchell had collected, then arose the more practical question as to whether there were enough deaf mutes in the city to justify the establishment of a school. The result was the first census of deaf mutes ever made in this country. The Committees appointed presented,

at a third meeting, on January 23, 1817, reports from seven of the ten wards in this city, giving the names and residences of sixty-six deaf mutes. The population of this city was then 120,000, which showed a proportion of one to 1,818, which does not differ very much from that which obtains at the present time.

A list of officers and directors, at the head of which was the name of the Hon. DeWitt Clinton, was then formed, and a petition presented to the Legislature for an act of incorporation. The high character of the applicants, and the unexceptional, though novel nature of the application, insured a ready and favorable hearing, and on the 15th of April, 1817, the New York Institution for the Deaf and Dumb acquired a legal existence with the usual corporate privileges. By an interesting coincidence, this was the same day that the Asylum of Hartford was open for the reception of pupils. On the 22nd of May, 1817, the board of directors met for the first time. The first act was to appoint a committee to write to England fer a teacher. under the impression that the system of articulation introduced by Braidwood would be of more value than the French system, which discarded it. No answer was received until the summer of 1818, when the terms demanded were found so exorbitant that it was impossible to accede to them. On the twenty-fourth of March, 1818, the deaf and dumb of New York were collected in the court room in the city hall, and lent an affecting influence to an address delivered by Dr. Mitchell to an assemblage of the prominent ladies and gentlemen of the city, on the necessity of making provisions for their education. On the twentieth of May of the same year was found in a room which the city authorities had kindly set apart in the alms-house, then situated in the City Hall Park, a benevolent looking gentleman, of liberal education, named Mr. Abraham C. Stansbury, who had been a year in the asylum at Hartford, in the capacity of superintendent ef the administrative department, and whom, after waiting in vain to hear from Europe, the directors of the New York Institution had engaged to take charge of their new school. Around him were grouped four young deaf mutes who had been brought to him this morning, and whom he was in the act of teaching the letters of the manual alphabet. They were to live at home, and come to him every day. Before the close of the year 1818, had been gathered thirty-three pupils, and Miss Mary Stansbury had been employed as an additional teacher. Twenty-four of these pupils were day scholars, and nine were boarders who were accommodated in hired rooms for their benefit. Some of these were paying pupils, but the expenses of the majority were defrayed by charitable contributions and by the city of New York, which agreed to make an annual appropriation of $400. At the annual meeting of the members of the institution, composed of ladies and gentlemen, who had agreed to pay three dollars annually or thirty dollars in one sum, held on the third

Tuesday of May in that year, in accordance with the terms of the charter, Dr. Mitchell was elected president. in the place of DeWitt Clinton, who having been elected Governor, felt constrained to retire. In the spring of 1819, as the number of pupils had reached forty-seven, it was found impossible to support the institution on the limited resources they could command, and accordingly Dr. Mitchell, as president, and Dr. Ackerly as secretary of the board of trustees, accompanied by Mr. Stansbury and seven of his pupils, proceeded to Albany, and held an exhibition before the Legislature. The result of the favorable impression thus created was the passage, on the 13th of April, 1819, of two acts—one making a direct appropriation of $10,000 from the state treasury, and the other securing to the institution a moiety of a tax on lotteries in the city of New York, from which, for fourteen years thereafter, a considerable part of its income was derived.

In the June following, Mr. Horace Loofborrow was engaged as an assistant teacher. In 1821 a further grant was obtained from the Legislature of $2,500, and on the 16th of April, 1822, was passed an Act appropriating $150 each per annum for thirty-two indigent State pupils, four of whom were to be sent from each Senate district, and authorizing the supervisors of any county in such district to send to the institution, at the expense of the county, any deaf mutes not provided for by the preceding arrangement. In this way, it was thought, no deaf mute would be left without instruction. The term of instruction was, however, unfortunately limited to three years. In the meantime important changes had taken place in the organization of the institution. Mr. Stansbury departed for Europe, in May, 1821, and Mr. Horace Loofborrow was made principal, an office which he held for nearly ten years. The administrative department of the institution was placed in the hands of Dr. Samuel Ackerly as superintendent and physician, who occupied the post till February, 1831. In 1827 an Act of the Legislature was passed granting $10,000 to aid in the erection of buildings for the permanent use of the institution, coupled with three conditions; 1st—That the directors should raise an equal amount; 2nd—That the location and plans should receive the approval of the Superintendent of Common Schools, and the expenditures accounted for to the State Comptroller, and; 3rd—That the institution should be subject to the inspection of the Superintendent of Public Schools, this officer being, at the same time, authorized to visit other institutions for the deaf and dumb, and to suggest to the directors such improvements in the system of instruction as might seem to him desirable.

The directors having complied with the conditions, the corner-stone of the new building was laid on Fiftieth street between the Fourth and Fifth avenues, by the Hon. A. G. Flagg, Secretary of State and *ex-officio* Superintendent of Common Schools, in presence

of a large assemblage of friends of the institution. The site selected was an acre of ground donated by the city, but some ten acres of land adjoining were leased from the city for the use of the pupils. For one who sees it now, densly built up with elegant stone structures, it is difficult to realize that this was then a rural spot surrounded by green fields, woods and pasture lots, and reached only by country roads. The building was dedicated in its human purposes on the 30th of September, 1829. The address on the occasion was delivered by Rev. James Milnor, D. D., Rector of St. George's Church, who at the election in May had been chosen as the successor of Dr. Mitchell in the office of president. Though the cost had exceeded the original estimate by $150,00, amounting in all to $35,000, the entire amount, except $10,000 given by the State, was secured by the directors, who thus far excedded the condition imposed upon them by law.

While these events were transpiring, the Superintendent of Common Schools visited the institutions at Hartford and Philadelphia, and made a careful comparison of their system of instruction with that which had been pursued in New York, and made a careful report of his observations, which indicated his opinion as to the course it was desirable for the directors to pursue. The labors and anxieties connected with erecting a suitable building having been brought to an end, the directors now turned their attentions to making improvement in the internal management, and especially in the *personnel* of the corps of instruction. Under the inspiring guidance of their new president they inaugurated measures designed to give the institution a leading position in this country and in the world. Dr. Milnor visited Europe in 1830, at his own expense, and inspected a large number of institutions. On his return he brought with him from the Paris Institution, Prof. Leon Vaisse, an instructor who held high rank in the corps of the Paris Institution, to which he returned after some years of service in New York, and successively made vice-principal and principal.

The services of Harvey P. Peet, A. M., who has been associated with Dr. Gallaudet in the Hartford Institution as an instructor since the year 1823, and had, during the most of the time, had the charge of the administrative department of that institution, was soon after engaged to combine, under one head, the hitherto separate offices of principal and superintendent.

From this, dates a new era in the history of the institution. Mr. Peet, (afterwards known as Dr. Peet, by virtue of the title of L. L. D., conferred upon him by the Regents of the University of the State of New York,) entered upon his duties on the first of February, 1831, and at once, with characteristic vigor, began to introduce the changes which his experienced eye found necessary. He was a man of judgment and indefatigable energy, and he left nothing unattempted that would redound to the benefit and reputa-

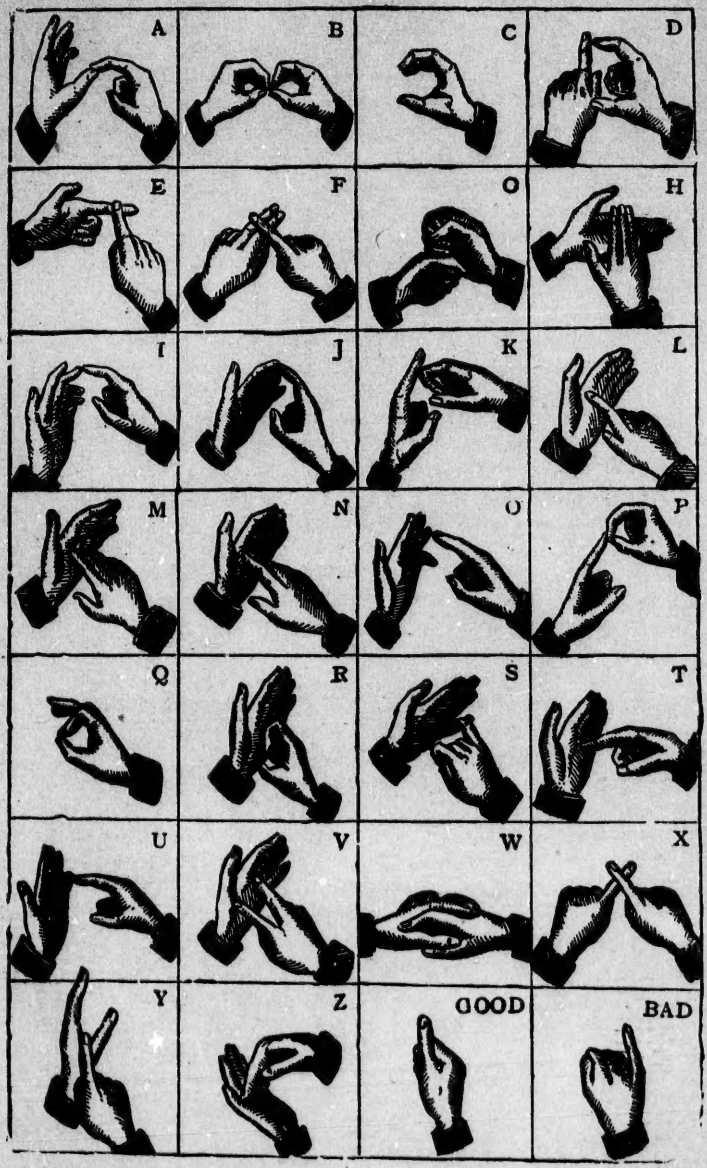
SAINT-SULPICE

tion of the institution. He always kept it before the public eyes, both in the city and at the capital. He procured teachers who had the making of men that would be considered eminent in any profession. He prepared and published a course of instruction for the deaf and dumb which has been adopted in all the institutions in this country. He organized and furthered during his life, a system of convention of teachers of the deaf and dumb which have continued to the present time. He constantly contributed himself and urged his associates to contribute articles for various periodicals, chiefly the American Annals of the Deaf and Dumb supported by all the institutions in the country, and in every way inspired enthusiasm in his associates as well as his pupils; and yet, withal, he was a man of quiet manners and dignified presence, combining seemingly opposite qualities in such a way as to bring to the institution and to cause everything that was needed for their advancement. Obtaining the confidence of a board of directors, composed of gentlemen of much more than usual intelligence, he secured their co-operation and influenced in all measures where his special knowledge and ability gave him pre-eminence, and was guided by them in all matters where their united wisdom and varied experience were put in exercise for the benefit of the institution. The result was that the institution gained a full measure of that public favor that was essential to its prosperity. The period of instruction was lengthened at various times until it finally reached eight years, and additions were made to the number of State pupils, till by the Act of 1862, every indigent deaf mute in the State, between the ages of twelve and twenty-five was entitled to education at the public expense. The number of pupils were also steadily increased from eighty-five at the time of Dr. Peet's accession, to the unprecedent number of 439 at the close of his administration. The influence which brought it about were the wide disseminations of notices of the institution circulated in its annual reports, which reached almost every person of leading influence in the several counties, and especially county and town officers, by the union with the New York institution, in 1836, of the Central Asylum, established in 1821, at Canajoharie, N. Y., by sending agents through the State to seek out the uneducated deaf and dumb, and by a tour in which Dr. Peet visited every city and many towns of importance in the State.

BIBLIOTHEQUE
CAMP-SUPPICE

DOUBLE HANDED ALPHABET

FOR THE DEAF MUTE AND OTHERS.



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